

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of the Application of the
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER COMPANY
(U 133 W) for an order authorizing it to increase
rates for water service in 2004 in its Region 1
Customer Service Areas by \$179,200 or 2.62% in
the Arden-Cordova CSA; \$93,400 or 1.98% in the
Bay Point CSA; and \$115,900 or 4.55% in the Ojai
CSA; and various other relief.

Application 03-10-057
(Filed October 30, 2003)

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE'S RULING
REQUIRING MEET AND CONFER
PRIOR TO THE PREHEARING CONFERENCE**

Prehearing Conference

As previously noticed by the calendar clerk, a prehearing conference
(PHC) will be held at the Commission Courtroom in San Francisco on:

Friday, December 19, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

Issues for Discussion

SoCalWater presents this application as a partial general rate case filing
tailored to address ORA's resource constraints, after consultation with ORA, by
limiting the scope to (1) a single test year review for three of the seven customer
service areas in Region I and, (2) certain other, non-controversial issues. ORA's
protest largely contests this characterization. At a minimum, it appears a
fundamental misunderstanding may have occurred in the course of prior
discussions. Therefore, authorized representatives of the parties are directed to

meet and confer, in good faith, prior to the PHC, in order to explore one another's views and be prepared more fully to discuss the following matters.

1. Under the GRC filing schedule developed pursuant to the Rate Case Plan adopted by Decision 90-08-045, when should this GRC for SoCalWater's Region I have been filed (month/year)?
2. When did SoCalWater tender the NOI for this application?
3. When did the discussions about deferral/delay of this GRC occur?
4. Are any issues uncontested? If so, please identify them.
5. Please identify the issues that likely will require evidentiary hearing because the material facts are in dispute.
6. Please identify known, disputed legal issues.
7. Could any contested issues be deferred to the 2004 GRC filing proposed in the application -- why or why not?
8. Explain how bifurcating this proceeding, as ORA proposes, will conserve resources and lead to efficient resolution of this proceeding.
9. Could bifurcation result in multiple rate changes for customers within a relatively short period of time?

Public Participation Hearings

ORA asks the Commission to hold public participation hearings (PPHs) in connection with this application but does not specify the number or location of such hearings. Considering the current state budget crisis, and the cost-cutting measures being undertaken by the Commission, I would like to explore this recommendation further. To facilitate useful discussion of this subject, parties should be prepared to discuss when and where PPHs were last held in Arden-Cordova, Bay Point, or Ojai and the degree of customer participation experienced.

Other Issues

Parties should ensure that one or more authorized representatives attend the PHC and that such representatives are generally familiar with the Application so as to permit useful discussion of any other substantive or procedural issues that may be raised.

IT IS RULED that:

1. Prior to the prehearing conference, the parties shall meet and confer to discuss the matters raised in the body of this ruling.
2. Parties shall be prepared to discuss public participation hearing issues identified in the body of this ruling.

Dated December 12, 2003, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ JEAN VIETH
Jean Vieth
Administrative Law Judge

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have by mail this day served a true copy of the original attached Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Requiring Meet and Confer Prior to the Prehearing Conference on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record.

Dated December 12, 2003, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ TERESITA C. GALLARDO

Teresita C. Gallardo

N O T I C E

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.

The Commission's policy is to schedule hearings (meetings, workshops, etc.) in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities. To verify that a particular location is accessible, call: Calendar Clerk (415) 703-1203.

If specialized accommodations for the disabled are needed, e.g., sign language interpreters, those making the arrangements must call the Public Advisor at (415) 703-2074, TTY 1-866-836-7825 or (415) 703-5282 at least three working days in advance of the event.